

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 AID-20 DRC-01 /138 W

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R 182116Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9720

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, PE8/ 3:

SUBJECT: GOE REACTION TO VELASCO PROPOSAL OF ARMS MORATORIUM

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT, IN SPEECH DELIVERED JANUARY 16, RESPONDED INDIRECTLY TO VELASCO MORATORIUM PROPOSAL CITING PEACEFUL HISTORY OF ECUADOR AND HOPE OF PROSCRIBING USE OF ARMS TO ATTACK NEIGHBORS. HE DID NOT REFER TO PERUVIAN PRESIDENT OR HIS PROPOSAL. EDITORIAL COMMENT HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF ALLEGED ILLOGIC IN VELASCO STATEMENTS BUT SUPPORTIVE OF GENERAL IDEA OF ARMS MORATORIUM. SOME NOTE IRONY OF PROPOSAL COMING FROM PERU JUST AFTER COMPLETION OF BIG ARMS DEAL. END SUMMARY.

2. IN GRADUATION CEREMONIES AT AIR FORCE ACADEMY SALINAS, PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ LARA DELIVERED GRADUATION ADDRESS IN WHICH HE GAVE INDIRECT RESPONSE TO VELASCO MORATORIUM PROPOSAL. PRESIDENT REFERRED TO ECUADOR AS HISTORICALLY PEACEFUL NATION AND SAID NATION HAD NEVER BEEN AGGRESSOR. STATED ECUADOR BELIEVED IN PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF ALL

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HUMAN CONFLICTS, BASED ON RESPECT FOR RIGHTS OF OTHERS

AS ONLY GUARANTEE OF ENDURING PEACE. REFERRING TO EFFORTS OF LATIN AMERICA TOWARD INTEGRATION AND TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS OF ITS PEOPLE BY PEACEFUL MEANS, PRESIDENT EXPRESSED HOPE SOUTH AMERICAN STATES WOULD, AS FIRST STEP, DEFINITIVELY PROSCRIBE USE OF ARMS TO ATTACK NEIGHBORS.

3. PRESIDENT SAID ECUADOR HAD CONFIDENCE IN DIGNITY AND NOBILITY OF FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS AND ADDED THAT, ALTHOUGH IT APPEARED PARADOXICAL IN LIGHT OF RECENT HISTORY, WORLD WAS MOVING TOWARD NEW FORMS OF ORGANIZATION EMPHASIZING FAITH IN A WORLD SOCIETY - NOT YET ATTAINABLE - IN WHICH PEACE BASED ON MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING WOULD RULE. MEANWHILE, PRESIDENT SAID, WHILE EDUCATION WORKS TO ELIMINATE AGGRESSIVE INSTINCTS, ARMED FORCES OF ECUADOR HAVE DUTY OF DEFENDING FATHERLAND, PROTECTING TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF ITS INSTITUTIONS AND FULFILLING RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SECURITY AS WELL AS FOR THE HARMONIZATION AND COORDINATION OF TWIN AIMS OF SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT.

4. IN PRIVATE COMMENT FOREIGN MINISTER LUCIO PAREDES SAID THAT HE NOT KEEN ON CONFERENCE TO IMPLEMENT VELASCO INITIATIVE, BUT THAT IF IT REALLY CAME OFF ECUADOR WOULD HAVE TO PARTICIPATE.

5. EL COMERCIO ON JANUARY 11 NOTED DISCREPANCY IN STATEMENT OF VELASCO BETWEEN REFERENCE TO NEED TO ARM ONESELF TO DEFEND ONES' RICHES AND OTHER STATEMENT THAT NO THREAT TO PERU FROM NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES EXISTED. EDITORIAL STATED THAT IF CONFERENCE TAKES PLACE ALL THE CARDS OUGHT BE ON TABLE TO PREVENT FAILURE. CALLED ON PERU TO PROCEED THROUGH FORMAL CHANNELS TO PERMIT OTHER COUNTRIES GIVE PROPOSAL SERIOUS ATTENTION.

6. IN LATER EDITORIAL COMMENTARY ON PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ' INDIRECT RESPONSE, EL COMERCIO PRAISED NOBLE SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED BY PRESIDENT AND EXPRESSED BELIEF THAT HOPE FOR PEACEFUL, NON-AGGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT WAS SHARED THROUGHOUT AMERICAS. EDITORIAL NOTED THAT BECAUSE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VELASCO INITIATIVE HAD NOT BEEN FORMALLY PROPOSED, A FORMAL ANSWER COULD NOT BE EXPRECTED FROM ECUADOR.

7. OTHER COMMENT PRAISED VELASCO INITIATIVE IN IDEALISTIC TERMS OR WITH OPEN CYNISM. FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER AND EL TIEMPO COLUMNIST JULIO PRADO VALLEJO CALLED LY A FELICITOUS PROPOSAL WHICH MIGHT INCLUDE ALL L.A. COUNTRIES AND DESERVING OF ECUADOR'S SUPPORT IF MEETING

EVER SHOULD COME OFF. HE NOTES USUAL EXCUSE LEADING TO INCREASED ARMS PURCHASES IS THAT OTHERS' PURCHASES FORCE EFFORT TO MAINTAIN PARITY. RE VELASCO'S STATEMENT ON NECESSITY OF DEFENDING RESOURCES, PRADO INNOCENTLY ASKED WHAT THREAT EXISTS AND NOTED THAT PERUVIAN PRESIDENT DID NOT EXPLAIN WHY MASSIVE ARMS PURCHASES WERE NECESSARY. OTHER COMMENTATORS IRONICALLY REMARKED THAT PRESIDENT VELASCO'S PROPOSALS FOR PEACE HAD STRUCK RESPONSIVE EMOTIONAL CHORD, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF FACT THAT IT CAME AFTER PURCHASE BY PERU OF ALL THE MILITARY EQUIPMENT IT COULD BUY. SOME SUGGEST THAT ANY MORATORIUM MUST TAKE ACCOUNT OF DISCREPANCIES IN STRENGTH OF PARTICIPATING STATES AND ALLOW FOR ADJUSTMENTS. ALL REFER TO ECUADOR'S PEACEFUL TRADITIONS AND INNOCENCE OF ANY SUSPICION THAT IT COULD BE INITIATOR OF AN ARMS RACE.

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